

REMARKS

Applicant's counsel thanks the Examiner for the careful consideration given the application. By the present amendment, applicant has amended claims 29 and 34. Applicant has incorporated claims 4, 9-13 and 19 into independent claim 29. It is clear that claim 29, as now amended, defines over the prior art, taken together or individually. To assist the Examiner, the main independent claim is claim 29 and it is now directed at the embodiment of Figs. 12-14. The feature of claim 19 is now contained in claim 29, that is, the feature wherein first and second connectors extend diametrically opposite from the valve housing and third and fourth connectors are symmetrically inclined by less than 90 degrees with respect to a direction of the first connector (see the arrangement of Fig. 14). This arrangement of connectors is not disclosed by the cited references. In particular, please note that US 5443453 fails to disclose four connectors as required by amended claim 29.

Secondly, the prior art fails to disclose or suggest a combination of features including a partition dividing the chamber in two portions, four openings disposed diametrically opposite to each other, and four connectors arranged as in Fig. 14, i.e., not spaced 90° relative to each other as taught for example by US 2703586. This new combination as now presented in amended claim 29 enables the circuit connectors to be easily distinguishable from the blood connectors, in the ambit of a simple structure of the valve. This is an important innovation which is not shown or taught in the prior art. An innovation of this significance and importance is clearly patentable. For the foregoing reasons claim 29 and all claims dependent therefrom are clearly patentable. A Notice of Allowance is accordingly respectfully requested. If any further fees are required by this communication, please charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. GAMB-42880US2.

Respectfully submitted,

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